

# **1987 Final Report**

**State Officers Compensation Commission  
State of Alaska**

*A report and recommendations on compensation and  
benefits for members of the Alaska State Legislature*

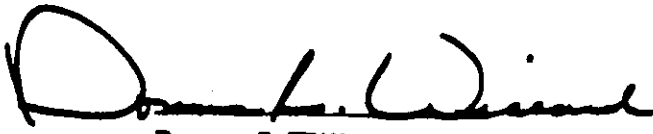
April 6, 1987

## State Officers Compensation Commission 1987 Members

Donna C. Willard, <i>Chairman, Anchorage</i> (business executive seat)	Term expires July 1, 1988
Cecelia A. Angasan, <i>Dillingham</i> (public seat)	Term expires July 1, 1989
Donald Argetsinger, <i>Anchorage</i> (public administrator seat)	Term expires July 1, 1990
Bryan F. Borjesson, <i>Fairbanks</i> (public seat)	Term expires July 1, 1988
Gary A. Brooks, <i>Palmer</i> (labor seat)	Term expires July 1, 1989
Susan Taylor Buchanan, <i>Anchorage</i> (public seat)	Term expires July 1, 1990
Kathleen L. Wakefield, <i>Juneau</i> (non-partisan voter organization seat)	Term expires July 1, 1987

Certification

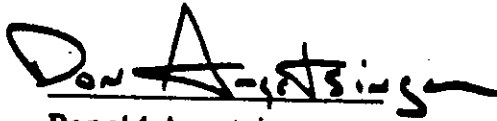
The following report and recommendations accurately represent the conclusions and findings of the Alaska State Officers Compensation Commission.



Donna C. Willard, Chairman



Cecelia A. Angasan



Donald Argetsinger



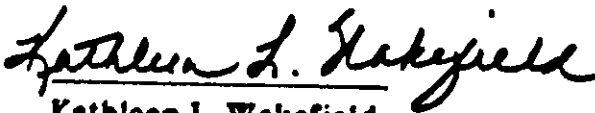
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*Dated: April 6, 1987*

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# *Foreword*

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The Alaska State Officers' Compensation Commission is charged with reviewing and recommending the salaries of legislative, judicial and executive officers in Alaska. Its responsibility and authority is derived from Title 39 of the Alaska Statutes as enacted under Chapter 124, Session Laws of Alaska 1986, signed into law June 8, 1986.

As mandated, the commission this year reviewed legislative compensation. In this report, the commission makes certain recommendations which it believes represent fair and adequate compensation for Alaska's legislators, regardless of periodic fluctuations in the state treasury.

The commission perceived its role as a neutral one: To develop recommendations based on an objective assessment of what legislative compensation should be in light of legislators' inherent responsibilities and the demands of the position.

The role of the legislature in the state is a critical one whether in good times or in difficult ones. The commission believes very strongly that compensation should depend, not on the ebb and flow of state revenue, but on the degree of responsibility and demands placed on legislators. Current budget constraints are neither relevant nor appropriate to an objective assessment of fair and adequate compensation.

The commission further concluded that its recommendations should not be unduly swayed by either the perceived popularity of its proposals or potential political ramifications.

Given the commission's advisory function, it is left to the legislature to consider or disregard the political implications and the economic climate as it decides whether to enact legislation in accordance with the commission's recommendations.

# **Part I. The Commission**

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The State Officers Compensation Commission was created by the Alaska State Legislature in 1986 (Chapter 124, SLA 1986). The commission is composed of seven members appointed by the governor subject to confirmation by the legislature. No current state or municipal employee or official may serve on the commission.

The commission must include one representative of labor, one representative of a non-partisan voter organization, one business executive and one person with past experience in public administration. Commissioners are appointed to staggered, four-year terms. Members of the commission receive travel and per diem for attendance at commission meetings. Members also may receive per diem for work done on behalf of the commission upon approval of the chairman. They do not receive any other form of compensation.

## **A. Function**

The commission is required by law (AS 39.23.240) to review the benefits, salaries and allowances of legislative members and to submit a report on its findings to the legislature at least every two years, but not more than once a year.

As originally conceived, the commission would have been required to set the compensation level for legislators. However, absent a constitutional amendment to provide that authority, the commission's findings are advisory only. (See Section V. regarding recommendations to amend state law to reflect the commission's advisory status.)

The commission is required to develop a preliminary report, solicit and consider public comments, and present a final report of findings and recommendations to the legislature. The commission also may review the salaries and benefits of the governor, lieutenant governor, justices and judges, and heads of the principal departments.

## **B. 1986-87 Work**

The first members of the commission were appointed by former Governor Bill Sheffield in October, 1986. The enabling legislation called for the commission to issue its first report in November of 1986. However, because the appointments were made late in the year, the commission requested an extension of its report deadlines.

Between November, 1986, and early April, 1987, the commission reviewed the history of legislative compensation in Alaska, proceedings from the Alaska Constitutional Convention, compensation systems in other states and related policy issues. The commission solicited written and oral public comment, and duly considered the public comment in its deliberation.

### C. Resources and References

The following is a partial list of the sources and references used by the commission in the course of its deliberations:

- *The Book of the States*, 1986-87
- Proceedings of the Alaska Constitutional Convention
- *Alaska's Constitutional Convention*, by Victor Fischer
- Alaska Statutes and Session Laws
- Reports by the Alaska House Research Agency
- Reports of the Alaska Salary Commission (1977, 1978, 1979) and interviews with past members
- Minutes and reports of the Special Joint Committee on Legislative Salaries (1985)
- Compensation commission reports from Montana, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Maine
- Report from the federal Commission on Executive, Legislative and Judicial Salaries
- Magazine and newspaper articles related to compensation of elected officials at the state and national levels
- Statistics supplied by Alaska State Department of Labor; Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Retirement and Benefits; Legislative Affairs Agency
- Administrative Services Policy & Procedures Manual

# Part II. History

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The issue of compensation for elected public officials is not unique, either in time or place, to Alaska in the 1980s. It surfaces repeatedly at the national, state and local levels of government. Reports from similar commissions in other states reflect many of the same issues and questions considered by the Alaska State Officers Compensation Commission.

## A. Alaska's Constitutional Convention

Delegates to Alaska's 1955-56 Constitutional Convention debated the appropriate level and methods of compensation for legislators, and the duration of legislative sessions. The commission found that the proceedings indicate a consensus among the convention delegates that the issues of compensation and session length were closely related.

“The question of the method of payment and the length of the sessions are bound up together. We can't get away from that fact and we have to consider them together.” (*Delegate John C. Boswell*, p.1610)

“I also concur that if you do give them a compensation based on a daily performance, then you have to fix a maximum period for your sessions, with a possibility of allowing them to extend for an additional 30 days or something like that.” (*Delegate Ralph J. Rivers*, p.1597)

The document ultimately adopted by the delegates did not include a limit on either legislative salaries or on the duration of regular legislative sessions.

### *1. Compensation Level*

Several key elements came up repeatedly in delegates' debate about legislative service. The proceedings reflect a belief held by many of the delegates that to serve in the legislature is a sacrifice, which should be at least partially offset by compensation. They wanted to encourage good people to serve, and they felt compensation should be high enough to make political office feasible for a broad spectrum of Alaskans. They also were concerned about setting the compensation too high.

The delegates debated numerous compensation formulae and ceilings, as well as daily versus annual salaries, but they could not agree on a single figure or formula. The debate then turned to whether the delegates ought to simply leave the issue to the legislature's discretion.



"...I don't think there is any place where the legislature is so subject to the will of the people, and for that reason less apt to go overboard in any action they take...I think that it is both unwise and unnecessary to put any specific limitation in the constitution." (*Delegate Dorothy J. Awes*, p. 1651)

"If you take the right of the legislature to set salaries away, you have taken one of its most important functions away from it....you have to keep your legislature's functions intact." (*Delegate Mildred R. Hermann*, p. 1655)

"Now we trust the legislators to enact all our laws, and I think we can trust them to set their salaries...I think we ought to just leave it up to the legislators..." (*Delegate Seaborn J. Buckalew, Jr.*, p.1641)

That position prevailed, but not without opposition.

"...if we put no limit on the legislature, they are probably actually going to be getting less salary than if we put a limit. We had considerable discussion this morning about trying to get a good qualified legislator by paying at least an adequate salary, something where he would not lose too much by being a legislator. By leaving this thing strictly to the legislature I am afraid we have done exactly the contrary. I think we only have to look back to the last session of Congress to see what happened there. The pressure that was brought, the criticism they got for trying to raise their own salaries." (*Delegate Edward V. Davis*, p. 1653)

Several delegates also told the group that the demands on legislators go beyond formal legislative sessions.

"...all during the time you are a member of that legislature, whether you are in session or not, you spend a substantial amount of your time working with, helping people, answering questions and trying to assist individuals and groups in their problems, and it cannot be measured in terms of only the time the legislator, who is a public official, sits in the legislature when it is in plenary session." (*Delegate Victor C. Rivers*, p. 1609)

## 2. Session Length

The delegates also debated whether to impose a limit on the length of legislative sessions and whether to limit the legislature to biennial sessions. Proposals to limit regular legislative sessions failed. Arguments in support of a session limit included a greater degree of certainty for prospective legislators and the impetus provided by a deadline (*Delegate Ralph Rivers*, p. 1596).

In arguments against a session limit, delegates cited a national trend toward longer and more active state legislatures; the needs of a new state; fears that a deadline would create undesirable logjams of work; and an assumption that, under a system of open-ended sessions and annual salary,

“...legislators will conclude with as much dispatch as the public interest will permit the business of the legislature. They’ll be happy to get back home.” (*Delegate Steve McCutcheon*, p. 1591)

It appears that a commonly-held assumption among delegates was that legislative sessions would typically last 60 to 90 days, although in early years of statehood, sessions might go longer.

### B. 1960s-1975

Beginning in 1959, the Alaska State Legislature periodically revised the salary level and per diem rates for its members.

In 1959, the annual salary was set at \$3,000, with \$40 per diem for all legislators to cover daily expenses during the legislative session. In 1961, the salary was dropped to \$2,500, an office allowance of \$300 was added and two per diem rates were set, \$25 for legislators who lived permanently in Juneau, and \$35 for all the others.

The annual office allowance created in 1961 is a lump sum given to each legislator at the beginning of the legislative session for postage, stationery, stenographic services and other expenses. The expenses are not vouchered and the allowance is reported to the Internal Revenue Service as income.

In 1966, the salary was increased to \$6,000, and in 1970, raised to \$9,000. Also in 1970, the office allowance was increased first to \$1,000 and then to \$4,000. Per diem was \$35 for all legislators, but could be claimed only for the first 90 days of the legislative session, plus travel and settling-in time to and from Juneau.

In 1975, the legislature again raised the salary, this time tying it to the state employee pay schedule. Previously, specific dollar amounts were written into law. Chapter 205, SLA 1975 set the legislative salary at 33% of Step E, Range 28. That translated to an annual salary of \$14,720. Session per diem was increased to \$48 for all except Juneau legislators, who received \$35 per diem during the session.

(See Appendix A - *History of Salary and Benefits*; Appendix B - *Actual Minimum Earnings*; and Appendix C - *Per Diem System*.)

The 1975 measure also created a new retirement system specifically for elected officials, the Elected Public Officers Retirement System (EPORS), which was significantly more generous than the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS).

## C. Alaska Salary Commission (1976-1980)

The 1975 pay raise was in effect from July 1975 until October 1976. In the summer of 1975, three Anchorage men, Connell Murray, Bruce Pozzi and Chuck Evans waged a petition drive to put the pay raise to a referendum.

The petition drive succeeded and on August 24, 1976, voters repealed the pay raise with 80 percent of the vote. The repeal rolled back legislators' salaries to \$9,000. However, the Alaska State Supreme Court ruled that the new retirement system could not be repealed for those legislators already participating in it.

Earlier that year, the legislature created the Alaska Salary Commission to recommend compensation levels. Like the current State Officers Compensation Commission, the earlier body was composed totally of private citizens and served in an advisory capacity. The Alaska Salary Commission issued two final reports, one in January 1977 and the second in January 1979.

The 1977 report recommended a raise in pay from \$9,000 to \$11,750. The legislature adopted that recommendation, although other elements of the report were not adopted. Recommendations not accepted included a vouchered accounting system for the office allowance, and a two-tier per diem system under which the rate would be lowered after 100 days.

The 1977 recommendations were the first to tie legislative per diem to the rates applied to other state employees. In fact, per diem rates for legislators were usually consistent with rates set by the Department of Administration for all public employees. (See Appendix C - *Per Diem System*)

The 1979 final report recommended a pay increase to \$12,690 with adjustments to reflect cost-of-living increases. The house passed a bill essentially adopting the commission's recommendations, but the senate version was radically different, with a significantly higher salary.

The issue carried over to the next legislative session. It was resolved in 1980 with the senate version prevailing. The legislature abolished the Alaska Salary Commission, set legislators' salaries at Step A, Range 10, and approved three separate state pay scales for 1979, 1980 and 1981. The pay scales applied to all state workers, as well as to legislators.

As a result, legislators' salaries were retroactively increased to \$15,500 for the full year of 1979, and to \$17,280, retroactive to January 1, 1980. In 1981, they were increased to \$18,768, since that was the rate approved for a Step A, Range 10 employee. Changes in the state pay schedule are negotiated between employee unions and the administration, and confirmed by the legislature in the form of law.

## D. 1983 Pay Raise

Since legislators' salaries were set at Step A, Range 10, their compensation increased in the same manner as the pay of other state employees. By 1983, legislators were earning \$21,084 in base salary, plus \$80 per diem (\$60 for Juneau-based legislators). Per diem was earned for every day of the session and could be claimed while not in session, as well. (See Appendices B - *Actual Minimum Earnings*, and C - *Per Diem System*.)

In 1983, the legislature eliminated per diem and raised the base salary from Step A, Range 10 to Step A, Range 22, effective July 21, 1983. Under the state pay scale in effect at that time, a Range 22, Step A salary was \$3,900 a month, or \$46,800 a year.

In response to the pay raise, the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce began a petition drive to put the issue to the voters. When the chamber's effort began to falter, the Libertarian

Party took over the lead and subsequently gathered the 19,936 signatures required. The petition was certified September 26, 1984, with the initiative set to appear on the 1986 general election ballot.

Faced with the ballot initiative and criticism from the public and press, the legislature in 1985 appointed a special committee to address both the level of compensation and methods for setting it. That year, the legislature also removed their salaries from the pay schedule and froze them at \$46,800. Without that action, legislators' salaries would have increased along with other Step A, Range 22 employees.

### ***E. Joint Special Committee on Legislative Salaries (1985)***

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The special joint committee was composed of four legislators and three public members. Its work included, but was not limited to, comparison of legislative salaries in Alaska with those in other states, comparisons with other high-level state employees in Alaska, and review of the pre- and post-pay raise systems in Alaska.

The committee recommended creation of a State Officers Compensation Commission and a revised compensation structure to be in effect until the new commission issued its recommendations.

### ***F. 1987 Salaries and Benefits***

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The State Officers Compensation Commission was created under Chapter 124, Session Laws of Alaska 1986. That measure also rolled legislators' base salaries back to Step A, Range 10, and reinstated per diem at the general state employee level, effective in January, 1987. Passage of Chapter 124 removed the pay raise repeal initiative from the 1986 ballot. As a result, in 1987 most legislators will receive \$22,140 in salary and at least \$9,600 in per diem (120 days at \$80 per day), for a total of \$31,740.<sup>1</sup>

Retirement benefits for those legislators were increased 133 per cent, because three consecutive years of a higher salary raises the salary base used in the retirement benefit formula. Retirement benefit increases resulting from the 1983 pay raise remain in effect for those legislators who earned the higher salary for three full years, so long as they meet the five-year minimum vesting requirement.

The Alaska Supreme Court ruled in 1976 that retirement benefits earned cannot be taken away, so the increased retirement benefits received under the pay raise remain in place, despite the reduction that took effect in January, 1987.

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, legislators may claim "moving per diem" for up to 15 days before legislative sessions in odd-numbered years, and up to 10 days before in even-numbered years. Legislators also may claim moving per diem for up to five days after each legislative session. "Moving per diem" is higher than short-term per diem, because family members are also covered. Interim per diem may also be claimed for committee or other legislative work done, both at home and away, when the legislature is not in session. The amounts actually claimed in the early 1980s varied dramatically, in large part depending on the leadership position of the individual legislator. The 1983 pay raise effectively eliminated the practice of claiming per diem during the interim for work done in the legislator's hometown.

# Part III.

## Policy issues reviewed in deliberations

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### A. Full-time vs. part-time

The question of whether legislators work full-time or part-time never fails to emerge in discussions and debates about legislative compensation in Alaska. The question is relevant because a major factor in setting a fair level of compensation hinges on whether legislative service is a full-time position or a part-time one.

The commission recognizes that some legislators do work essentially full-time on legislative and constituent business. Legislative demands vary tremendously from legislator to legislator, but few if any completely cease legislative work once the session has adjourned.

The commission believes there is a distinction between whether legislators do in fact work full-time, and whether the job requires -- and the public expects -- that they work full-time.

#### 1. Interim demands

The public sends a mixed message to its legislators. The constitutional amendment approved by voters in 1984, limiting regular legislative sessions to 120 days, was a clear signal that Alaskan voters do not want year-round sessions.

On the other hand, constituents place demands on their legislators regardless of time of year or even time of day. Few legislators can get away with saying "sorry, I'm only part-time. Call me in January."

Constituent demands, committee work, organizational matters and other legislative responsibilities do add up to varying degrees of workload for legislators even when the legislature is not in session.

#### 2. Constitutional Convention references

The commission reviewed excerpts from the proceedings of Alaska's Constitutional Convention. The delegates talked about the full-time/part-time issue during deliberation about salary. Upon review of the proceedings, the commission concluded that most, though not all, of the delegates *assumed* that legislative service would not be required on a full-time, year-round basis.

#### 3. The "citizen legislature"

The phrase "citizen legislature" is frequently cited in arguments supporting a part-time legislature. The commission does not find any specific references or precise definitions of the phrase.

A "citizen legislature" could mean that: 1) any citizen may serve; 2) legislative service is part-time; 3) legislative service should not substitute for an on-going career;

or 4) the legislature should contain a broad cross-section of individuals who are not professional politicians.

The delegates to the constitutional convention did not refer to a "citizen legislature" per se, although there were a few references to discouraging "career legislators."

#### ***4. Work outside the legislature***

The commission examined how the nature of legislative service impacts employment outside the legislature. Alaskans with typical year-round 9-to-5 jobs may be precluded from serving in the legislature, unless they give up their outside jobs altogether. Flexible or seasonal careers and occupations can be more easily maintained concurrent with legislative service. On the other hand, some employers and business partners perceive an advantage to employing a legislator, despite the time constraints on performance of his or her duties.

The commission concluded that even though many Alaskans might find it difficult or even impossible to keep their present jobs while serving in the legislature, legislative service can be an advantage in employment. The commission found that legislative service does not necessarily preclude other, concurrent employment.

#### ***5. Relation between 120-day session and full/part time status***

Members of the commission disagreed about the significance of the 120-day session on the part-time versus full-time question. A majority on the commission concluded that the 1984 voter approval of the session limit is strong evidence that Alaskans do not want a full-time legislature or full-time legislators.

However, a minority of the commission found that productivity of the legislature while in session was a bigger factor in voters' minds than session length, per se. A minority of the commission also concluded that in rural Alaska, people are much less concerned than their urban counterparts, about whether legislators and the legislature are full-time or part-time.

### ***B. Basis for compensation***

#### ***1. Responsibilities***

Regardless of committee or leadership assignments, legislators bear inherent responsibility for writing the laws of the State of Alaska and appropriating state monies for the public good. The commission found that the importance of that responsibility should be reflected in compensation.

#### ***2. Time demands***

Despite the 120-day limit on legislative sessions, the commission recognized the substantial demands made on a legislator's time throughout the year.

### ***3. Constituent demands***

The commission recognized that demands made by constituents contribute to the work load and should be considered in development of compensation levels.

### ***4. Cost of living adjustments (geographic)***

The commission recognized that a legislator from Anchorage has more spending power than his/her counterpart in Dillingham or Kotzebue, due to cost-of-living differences. However, the commission concluded that the practical difficulties of instituting a system to account for the difference would override any disparity in spending power.

### ***5. Irritation factor***

The commission recognized that extreme tolerance and patience may be essential in legislative service, but they do not merit additional compensation.

### ***6. Public service factor***

The commission found that inherent in public service is a degree of sacrifice. Compensation should be high enough to mitigate that sacrifice, but not so high that the compensation becomes the main attraction.

### ***7. Comparisons***

Past salary commissions in Alaska and other states, and a special legislative committee all employed different methods of comparison to assist in developing recommended compensation levels. The commission reviewed those methods of comparison.

*(a) Other states.* Most of the states with the highest compensation levels have legislatures which meet year round. Aside from those states, compensation levels fluctuate dramatically from state to state. The commission found that the variation among states precludes it from drawing any meaningful comparison.

*(b) Private sector.* The commission found that the part-time status of legislative service and the public service aspect of it preclude meaningful comparison with positions of similar responsibility in the private sector.

The commission recognized that a very high level of responsibility is inherent in legislative service. Unlike other highly responsible positions, however, legislators are not required to show years of experience, degree of expertise, or prior accomplishments in a related field.

*(c) State employees.* The commission considered the argument used by former and present legislators that they should not receive less than their staff. The commission concluded that comparing staff salaries is not relevant because staff are not elected officials. That question is also raised periodically in debate about whether any state employee should be paid more than the governor. The fundamental question in that issue is whether a public servant *elected* to office should be paid

commensurate with public officials *hired* because of their specific background, expertise and skills.

## ***8. Range in duties and responsibilities***

The commission reviewed the practice used in some states of paying legislators more according to their leadership positions and committee chairmanships. The commission concurred with the tradition of providing \$500 additional compensation to the Senate President and Speaker of the House as an honorary recognition of, as opposed to actual compensation for, their duties and responsibilities over and beyond those of other legislators.

The commission opposed any other pay differentials based on leadership and committee chairmanships, because such a system might encourage creation of additional and possibly needless committees. Such pay differentials also would be unfair to members of the minority.

## **C. Purpose of compensation**

### ***1. Services rendered***

The commission found that actual services rendered by legislators should be a factor in compensation, but the quality of those services is a matter for voters to decide.

### ***2. Compensate for sacrifice***

The commission noted discussions during the constitutional convention focusing on the delegates' clear desire that legislative service not be limited to a wealthy elite and that the inherent sacrifice merits some mitigating compensation.

The commission concluded that in general, the public doesn't always recognize the sacrifices required of legislators. The commission found that the current level of compensation is inadequate, in light of the responsibilities and sacrifices of legislative service.

### ***3. Encourage broad spectrum of candidates***

The commission noted that delegates at the constitutional convention, as well as other deliberative bodies in lower 48 states, have emphasized the desire to make legislative service accessible to as broad a spectrum of citizens as possible. The commission concluded that Alaska does enjoy a broad range of candidates.

### ***4. Attract quality candidates***

The commission noted discussions during Alaska's Constitutional Convention about the delegates' desire to attract quality people to legislative service. The commission agreed that compensation should be sufficient to allow a broad spectrum



of Alaskans to consider legislative service. At the same time, the commission found that legislative compensation is only one of many factors considered by potential candidates.

### ***5. Retain good people***

The commission noted the desire of the constitutional convention delegates to "attract and retain" good people. The commission considered whether longevity is desirable among legislators and discussed whether additional compensation based on longevity would be appropriate.

The commission concluded that the experience and depth of knowledge that come with years of service is very valuable, but that such value should be recognized by voters, rather than by additional compensation.

### ***6. Impact of salary level on number and caliber of candidates***

The commission considered the impact of salary level on the number and caliber of candidates seeking legislative service. The commission concluded that level of compensation may be a deterrent to some potential candidates, but it is not necessarily the deciding factor.

Other factors include impact on family, career, employment or business, and perhaps most important, the perceived strength of opposing candidates. The commission concluded that only the voters can judge the caliber of candidates and legislators.

On an ancillary issue, the commission found that the 120-day session limit encourages more citizens to run for the legislature because of increased certainty about the commitment of time away from home.

## ***D. Types and mix of compensation***

### ***1. Base salary***

The commission considered several different levels of salary compensation. It concluded that the current level (Range 10, Step A) is inadequate.

### ***2. Per diem***

The commission considered per diem rates, both during the session and in the interim; living expenses incurred while residing in Juneau during the session; and factors which may aggravate or mitigate the personal economic impact of legislative service. For example, if a legislator is able to rent his/her district home during the session, out-of-pocket expenses are considerably reduced.

The commission also had concerns about the policies and procedures used to approve state-funded trips home during the legislative session and approval of claims for per diem when the legislature is not in session. Of particular concern is the procedure for claiming per diem for work done in a legislator's hometown when the legislature is not in session.

A review of records from 1981 and 1982 reflects significant disparity in claiming of interim per diem. For example, in 1981, legislators theoretically earned approximately \$31,500 in salary and per diem for 144 days of the session. Yet, at least ten legislators received \$5,000 to nearly \$12,000 more. The commission understands that committee assignments of majority members can require frequent travel when the legislature is not in session. However, the per diem system as used then, and reinstated in January, 1987, appears to allow per diem to be collected during the interim without clear and obvious justification.

### ***3. Office Allowance***

The commission considered the purpose, use and method of distribution of the \$4,000 annual office allowance. The commission concluded that the office allowance should be clearly separate from other forms of compensation, it should be accounted for, and it should not increase a legislator's tax liability.

The commission spent considerable time discussing the office allowance that each legislator receives in a lump sum at the beginning of each legislative session. Commission members discussed and debated whether it should be clearly separated from earnings or rolled into the salary. The commission concluded that the allowance should be used for the purposes intended in the statutes, i.e. postage, stationery, stenographic services and other office expenses.

### ***4. Retirement***

The commission considered the history and structure of legislative retirement benefits, and the impact of compensation levels on retirement benefits. Lack of adequate time prevented the commission from undertaking a thorough study.

### ***5. Other benefits***

The commission considered the health and medical insurance, and supplemental benefits received by legislators, which are identical to those received by other public employees.

### ***6. Compensation Package***

The commission considered several different packages of compensation, encompassing salary, per diem and office allowance.

### ***7. Tax liability factors***

The commission considered the tax liability impacts of the various compensation formulas.

## *8. Newcomers' stipend*

The commission discussed the concept of a newcomers' stipend to help cover expenses and compensate for work incurred between the election in early November and the actual swearing-in in January. Even though new legislators do not formally take office until January, the demands, in terms of time and money, begin immediately after the election results are in. For example, there are meetings required to organize each body of the legislature, and constituents begin making inquiries and requesting assistance as soon as the votes are tallied.

The commission was aware of a 1959 opinion from the Attorney General indicating that compensation may not accrue until the official is sworn into office. However, the commission suggested that the legislature explore a legally-defensible method to offset expenses incurred by new legislators before they are sworn in to office. The commission's suggestion was made with the understanding that outgoing legislators would continue to receive their salary until the end of the calendar year.

## *E. Public comments*

The commission solicited public comments at two stages of its deliberations. In late December and early January, advertisements solicited written comment on the general subject of legislative pay. Eight responses were received. Three recommended higher salaries. Five recommended lower salaries, although several of those respondents apparently thought legislators receive more than they actually do.

In March, the commission held two public hearings via the statewide teleconference network to obtain comments on its preliminary report. At the first hearing on March 14, three people testified. They were generally supportive of the commission's recommendations.

At the second hearing on March 17, 37 people testified: 14 in Anchorage; six in Mat-Su; four in Soldotna; three legislators in Juneau; two each in Wrangell, Sitka and Slana; and one each in Kodiak, Delta Junction, Teller and Dillingham.

Most of the comments addressed only the salary issue. Thirty-one of those who testified spoke against a pay raise, most of them on grounds that an increase is inappropriate in light of layoffs and pay cuts among the private sector and public employees. Quite a few people also cited proposed reductions in education, social services and seniors' programs, calling it "ludicrous" to consider a pay raise now.

Two people generally supported the report but suggested use of a formula to determine the salary. One person said the recommendation is too conservative. Several people said they were angry over the lack of public process in the 1983 pay raise and were pleased to have a public process now.

Those who mentioned the office allowance recommendations agreed with it. Several also agreed with the recommendation to eliminate per diem.

The commission also received written comment from 16 people who did not testify at the public hearings. Most of the written comment reflected the same sentiments as the oral comment, i.e. against an increase in legislative compensation.

# Part IV.

## Commission Recommendations

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### A. Salary

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**Currently:** Legislators receive a base salary of \$22,140 (Range 10, Step A). With a minimum of \$9,600 in session per diem added in, most legislators will receive at least \$31,740 this year, and some may receive more, depending on the amount of interim per diem they claim.

#### *Recommendations:*

•Change annual base salary from Range 10, Step A (\$22,140) to \$39,000.

•Retain the annual \$500 honorarium for the presiding officer in each house.

**Justification:** Range 10, Step A is inadequate considering the demands on legislators, their inherent responsibilities and the time required even when the legislature is not in session. The recommended salary level is not meant to represent or imply that the commission has determined that legislative service is a full-time, year-round job.

Perhaps more important is that in reality legislators make more than \$22,140, when session and interim per diem are added to salary. A flat salary, with much greater limitations on collection of per diem, reduces *de facto* inequities among legislators, and provides the public with a much more accurate picture of legislative compensation.

**Recommended effective date:** January 1, 1988.

## ***B. Session Per Diem***

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**Currently:** Legislators whose permanent residence is not Juneau receive \$80 per diem every day of the legislative session. Legislators whose permanent residence is Juneau receive \$60 per diem. Legislators also may collect per diem for "moving in" and "moving out" time immediately before and after the legislative session. Legislators are reimbursed for moving expenses to and from Juneau before and after the legislative session.

For travel required during the session, legislators receive per diem or reimbursement in addition to session per diem. Various formulae have been used to calculate the amount they receive.

### ***Recommendations:***

•Eliminate per diem while the legislature is in session, except for out-of-town travel on legislative business.

•For special sessions of the legislature, legislators whose permanent residence is not Juneau should receive short-term per diem if a special session is called.

**Justification:** The whole idea of per diem is that an employee should not have to pay for travel expenses incurred in the line of duty. The commission understands that most legislators are forced to maintain two homes while in office, one in Juneau and one in their home districts.

The commission concluded, however, that such interest is outweighed by inequities of the per diem system as it has been applied to legislators. For example, state employees travelling on business receive a lower ("long-term") per diem rate if they are away from home for more than 30 days. Legislators, however, receive the higher ("short-term") rate of per diem for the entire legislative session.

Eliminating session per diem, except for travel, may increase legislators' tax liability<sup>1</sup>. However, any legitimate business expenses, including maintenance of a second home in Juneau, would continue to be deductible.

The commission recognized that a higher salary level would raise the retirement base for those legislators who become vested in the state retirement system.

**Recommended effective date:** January 1, 1988.

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<sup>1</sup> The Legislative Affairs Agency is requesting clarification from the Internal Revenue Service to determine whether per diem for legislators must be reported as income. Per diem need not be reported for general state employees, so long as the per diem rate is equal to or lower than the federal rate. However, the LAA believes there may be special reporting requirements for legislators.

## ***C. Interim Per Diem***

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***Currently:*** Legislators may claim and collect per diem for committee business or other legislative business. They receive a higher, or short-term rate if overnight travel is required, and a lower, or long-term rate for work in their home district. Per diem rates vary from place to place, but in Anchorage and Juneau, the short-term rate is \$80 and the long-term rate is \$50.

### ***Recommendations:***

•When the legislature is not in session, legislators should be paid per diem only for bona fide legislative business requiring overnight travel.

•Legislators should not receive per diem for work performed in their home town during the interim.

•The Department of Administration should review per diem rates for all state employees. The commission believes that the current per diem rates are too low to adequately cover reasonable lodging and meal expenses in most towns and cities.

***Justification:*** The present procedures allow the use of interim per diem as a salary supplement rather than an expense reimbursement, especially when per diem is collected for work in legislators' home towns. Current statutes are so loosely worded that, at least in theory, legislators may collect per diem for one hour's work spent writing to constituents. The point of per diem is to cover the expenses of travel required by work. It should be so limited.

The policies and procedures for claiming and receiving per diem should reflect accountability for expenditures, and all claims and collections should be well-documented. Controls on, and accountability of per diem should apply equally, whether the per diem is charged against a legislative committee budget or against leadership funds.

***Recommended effective date:*** June 1, 1987.

## ***D. Office Allowance***

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***Currently:*** Each legislator receives a check for \$4,000 at the beginning of the legislative session to use however he or she wishes. The law says the allowance is to be used for stationery, postage, stenographic services and other expenses.

### ***Recommendations:***

•Eliminate the lump-sum distribution.

•Institute an account system in the Legislative Affairs Agency under which each legislator can "charge" up to \$4,000 worth of personalized stationery, printing, postage and office equipment.

***Justification:*** The only accountability under the current system is between the legislator and the Internal Revenue Service. The \$4,000 is fully taxable income unless it is used to pay for business expenses. Legislators have pointed out to the commission that the \$4,000 is sometimes used for travel home during the session.

The office allowance was created in 1961, when legislators had little if any other resources with which to pay for office expenses. Now, however, most of the office expenses are paid for or supplied by the Legislative Affairs Agency and other legislative budgets, not the individual legislator.

Legislators are not required to personally pay for generic stationery, office phone bills, basic office equipment, and use of copy machines.

The commission believes that the \$4,000 office allowance should be accounted for and used only to pay for those office expenses which are not supplied: personalized stationery, printing of constituent correspondence, postage and additional office equipment. Any office equipment purchased under the account would be the property of the state and must be returned to the state when the legislator leaves office.

If the legislature decides to retain total discretion over the \$4,000 office allowance then it should not be called an office allowance, but instead be considered salary. A charge account system would provide a much clearer distinction between office expenses and earnings.

***Recommended effective date:*** January 1, 1988.

## ***E. Travel***

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***Currently:*** Travel on committee business is paid out of the committee budgets. The leadership in each house has funds that may be used to pay for a legislator's travel on approval of the presiding officer. Many legislators either pay out of their own pockets or use the \$4,000 office allowance to pay for travel to their home districts during the session.

### ***Recommendation:***

•Each legislator should be reimbursed for two round-trip visits to his/her home district during the legislative session for the purpose of constituent contact.

***Justification:*** The commission believes that constituent contact and face-to-face communication can be valuable and in the interests of the constituents, as well as the legislator.

***Recommended effective date:*** January 1, 1988.

## ***F. Benefits***

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***Currently:*** Legislators receive the same benefits as other state employees. They also may participate in the Public Employees Retirement System.

### ***Recommendation:***

•Retain the current system of retirement and other benefits, at least until the commission's next report.

***Justification:*** The commission believes that the retirement and benefits system should be reviewed in depth. The commission did review the benefits, but it believes a more thorough study needs to be done. The commission did not undertake that review this year because of the abbreviated timeframe under which it worked.

***Recommended effective date:*** Not applicable.



## Part V.

# Suggested amendments to Alaska statutes regarding the State Officers Compensation Commission

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The commission is concerned that the wording in state statutes may obfuscate the commission's function and create confusion among the general public about the commission's role. The commission also recommends the legislature consider technical amendments to clarify some ambiguities.

### A. Commission Authority

Absent a constitutional amendment, the recommendations of the State Officers Compensation Commission are advisory. As originally conceived, the commission would have had constitutional authority to set the compensation level for state legislators, as well as other high-ranking state officials. However, the legislature did not pass the resolution necessary to put the issue to the voters.

The commission supports a constitutional amendment to extend its authority. Elements of the language currently in law are technically incorrect since they presuppose authority which doesn't exist absent a constitutional amendment. However, the language should be retained if there's a possibility that such an amendment will be put to the voters.

However, if the commission is to *remain* advisory, the legislature should consider the following changes in the law to more accurately reflect the commission's actual function. (Statute is attached, see Pages 23-24).

1. Repeal AS 39.23.230(b), and AS 39.23.250.
2. Repeal effective dates referring to the constitutional amendment.

The above notwithstanding, the commission strongly urges the following amendment to reflect the commission's advisory capacity:

AS 39.23.260. POLICY OF THE LEGISLATURE. It is the policy of the legislature that the commission recommend [DETERMINE] an equitable rate and form of compensation, benefits, and allowances for legislators.

## B. Technical amendments

The commission's suggested technical amendments address the frequency of commission meetings; authority to hire staff; and any delay in presentation of commission reports.

1. Amend AS 39.23.200(c) to read: (c) The commission shall meet [EVERY OTHER YEAR] at the call of the chair. Notice of a meeting shall be mailed to each member at least 15 days before the date scheduled for the meeting.

2. Amend AS 39.23.230(a) to read: (a) The commission may hire staff. If requested by the commission, the Legislative Affairs Agency shall provide staff for the Commission.

3. Amend AS 39.23.240 by adding a new subsection to read: (g) The commission shall notify the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate if it is unable to meet the deadlines in (c) and (d) of this section, and shall further notify them of the date upon which the report will be presented.

(e) The commission shall be established in the Office of the Governor. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

*Cross references.* — For terms of initial members of commission, see § 7, ch. 124, SLA 1986, in the Temporary and Special Acts.

*Effective dates.* — Section 10, ch. 124, SLA 1986, makes this section effective June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS 01.10.070(c).

**Sec. 39.23.210. Prohibitions against state or municipal service.** A member of the commission may not be employed by the state, including the University of Alaska, serve as a member of another state board, commission, or authority, or hold elective state or municipal office during membership on the commission. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

*Effective dates.* — Section 10, ch. 124, June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS SLA 1986, makes this section effective 01.10.070(c).

**Sec. 39.23.220. Compensation.** Members of the commission serve without compensation but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized for members of boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

*Effective dates.* — Section 10, ch. 124, June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS SLA 1986, makes this section effective 01.10.070(c).

**Sec. 39.23.230. Staff.** (a) If requested by the commission, the Legislative Affairs Agency shall provide staff for the commission.  
(b) If requested by the commission, the director of personnel in the Department of Administration shall serve as secretary to the commission. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

*Effective dates.* — Section 10, ch. 124, June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS SLA 1986, makes this section effective 01.10.070(c).

**Sec. 39.23.240. Duties of the commission.** (a) The commission shall review the salaries, benefits, and allowances of members of the legislature and submit a report on its findings at least once every two years, but not more frequently than every year.

(b) The commission may review the compensation, benefits, and allowances of the governor, lieutenant governor, justices and judges of the court system, and the heads of the principal departments and shall report its recommendations to the legislature.

(c) The commission shall submit its preliminary findings and recommendations for the compensation of state officers by November 15. The commission shall give reasonable public notice of its preliminary findings and recommendations, solicit public comments, and give due

### Chapter 23. State Officers Compensation Commission.

Section 10 — 130. (Repealed)	Section 240. Duties of the commission
200. Compensation commission established	250. Filing with lieutenant governor and certification
210. Prohibitions against state or municipal service	260. Policy of the legislature
220. Compensation	270. Administrative Procedure Act
230. Staff	400. Definition

*Secs. 39.23.010 — 39.23.130. Alaska Salary Commission. (Repealed, § 37 ch 3 SLA 1980.)*

**Sec. 39.23.200. Compensation commission established.** (a) The State Officers Compensation Commission is established. The commission is composed of seven members appointed by the governor subject to confirmation by a majority of the legislature in joint session. Members serve for staggered terms of four years. Commission membership shall include at least one business executive, one representative of a nonpartisan voters' organization, one person with experience in public administration and one representative of a labor organization. A vacancy shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term. A commission member may serve no more than two complete consecutive terms.  
(b) The commission shall elect a member to chair its meetings. A majority of the commission members constitutes a quorum to transact business. The affirmative vote of four members is required to approve the commission's recommendations on compensation.

(c) The commission shall meet every other year at the call of the chair. Notice of a meeting shall be mailed to each member at least 15 days before the date scheduled for the meeting.

(d) The commission shall hold a public hearing to discuss its findings and recommendations before submitting its final report to the legislature.

regard to the public comments, before submitting a final report under (d) of this section.

(d) The commission shall make a final report of its findings and recommendations as to the rate and form of compensation, benefits, and allowances for legislators during the first 10 days of a legislative session.

(e) The commission may submit to the legislature amendments to the report submitted under (d) of this section.

(f) A commission member who does not concur in the proposed or final recommendations may attach written objections to the commission's report of its findings and recommendations. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986; am § 5 ch 124 SLA 1986)

**Amendment to subsection (d).** — Section 6, ch. 124, SLA 1986 amends (d) of this section. Under sec. 9, ch. 124, SLA 1986, that amendment "takes effect on the effective date of an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Alaska creating a State Officer's Compensation Commission." The subsection will then read: "(d) The commission shall make a final report of its findings and recommendations as to the rate and form of compensation, benefits, and allowances for legislators during the first 10 days of a legislative session. A recommendation has the force of law and becomes effective on the

first day of the next legislative session unless rejected by a concurrent resolution adopted by two-thirds of the members in each house of the legislature."

**Effective dates.** — Section 10, ch. 124, SLA 1986, makes this section effective June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS 01.10.070(c).

**Editor's notes.** — Section 8, ch. 124, SLA 1986 provides that notwithstanding the time limit imposed by this section, "the commission shall submit its first final report to the legislature by January 10, 1987."

**Sec. 39.23.250. Filing with lieutenant governor and certification [See effective date note].** The commission shall, upon transmitting its final recommendations for the compensation of legislators to the legislature, file the recommendations in the office of the lieutenant governor. When the recommendations become effective, the commission shall certify the copy of the recommendations on file in the office of the lieutenant governor. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

**Effective dates.** — Section 9, ch. 124, SLA 1986 provides that this section "takes effect on the effective date of an Compensation Commission."

**Sec. 39.23.260. Policy of the legislature.** It is the policy of the legislature that the commission determine an equitable rate and form of compensation, benefits, and allowances for legislators. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

**Effective dates.** — Section 10, ch. 124, SLA 1986, makes this section effective June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS 01.10.070(c).

**Sec. 39.23.270. Administrative Procedure Act.** The regulation-making provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (AS 44.62) do not apply to proceedings of the commission. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

**Effective dates.** Section 10, ch. 124, SLA 1986, makes this section effective June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS 01.10.070(c).

**Sec. 39.23.400. Definition.** In this chapter "commission" means the State Officers Compensation Commission. (§ 4 ch 124 SLA 1986)

**Effective dates.** — Section 10, ch. 124, SLA 1986, makes this section effective June 9, 1986, in accordance with AS 01.10.070(c).

# Part VI.

## Appendices

### Appendix A. History of legislators' salary & benefits

Year/Action	Salary	Per Diem	Allowance	Retirement
1971 ('70 legis.)	\$ 9,000	\$35	\$4,000 <sup>1</sup>	PERS
1975 (legis.)	14,720	48/35	4,000	Estab. EPORS
1976 (voter ref.)	9,000	35	4,000	Repeal EPORS <sup>2</sup>
1977 (legis.)	11,750	50/35	4,000	PERS
1979 ('80 legis.)	15,500 <sup>3</sup>	55/35	4,000	PERS
1980 ('80 legis.)	17,280	60/35	4,000	PERS
1981 ('80 legis.)	18,768	67/50	4,000	PERS
1982	20,076	80/60	4,000	PERS
1983-86('83 legis.)	46,800	0	4,000	PERS
1987 est.('86 legis.)	22,140	80/60	4,000	PERS

<sup>1</sup> Allowance first established in 1961 at \$300. Raised twice in 1970, first to \$1,000, then to \$4,000.

<sup>2</sup> Alaska State Supreme Court ruled that voters could not take away benefits received. Those who got into EPORS are still members; but no new ones since then.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. 3, SLA 1980 set legislative salary at Step A, Range 10; approved three different pay scales for 1979, 1980 and 1981 and retroactively applied the 1979 and 1980 pay schedule. Increases until 1983 were the result of increases in Step A, Range 10, consistent with the state employee pay scale.

Appendix B.  
Minimum actually earned by legislators

Year	Base Salary <sup>1</sup>	Per Diem (rate x days in session) <sup>2</sup>	Total
1968	\$6,000	\$35 x 86 = 3,010 *25 x 86 = 2,150	\$9,010 8,150*
1970	7,872	35 x 147 = 5,145 *25 x 147 = 3,675	13,017 11,547*
1971 <sup>(3)</sup>	9,000	35 x 90 = 3,150	12,150
1972	9,000	35 x 90 = 3,150	12,150
1973	9,000	35 x 90 = 3,150	12,150
1974	9,000	35 x 90 = 3,150	12,150
1975	11,860	35 x 90 = 3,150	15,010
1976 <sup>(4)</sup>	12,778	48 x 142 = 6,816 *35 x 142 = 4,970	19,594 17,748*
1977	10,716	50 x 141 = 7,050	17,766
1978	11,750	50 x 161 = 8,050 *35 x 161 = 5,635	19,800 17,385*
1979	15,500	55 x 115 = 6,325 *35 x 115 = 4,025	21,825 19,525*
1980	17,280	60 x 148 = 8,880 *35 x 148 = 5,180	26,160 22,460*
1981	18,768	67 x 168 = 11,256 *50 x 168 = 8,400	30,024 27,168*
1982	20,076	80 x 144 = 11,520 *60 x 144 = 8,640	31,596 28,716*
1983	32,488	80 x 162 = 12,960 *60 x 162 = 9,720	45,448 42,208*
1984	46,800	152 days - no per diem	46,800
1985	46,800	119 days - no per diem	46,800
1986	46,800	120 days - no per diem	46,800
1987 est.	22,140	80 x 120 = 9,600 *60 x 120 = 7,200	31,740 29,340*

Notes to chart on next page.

## Notes to Appendix B:

\* Juneau-based legislators received a lower rate of per diem.

(1) The base salary changed at various points during the years 1970, 1975, 1976, 1977 and 1983. The figures take into account mid-year changes to represent the total received.

(2) Per Diem: Special sessions in 1979, 1980 and 1981 are included. There were special sessions in 1973 and 1974, too, but unclear whether they received per diem for it. Per diem collected for work when the legislature not in session is not included.

(3) Ch. 193, SLA 1970 set per diem at \$35 for first 90 days of the session, effective July 16, 1970. Figures assume no per diem received after the 90th day. Actual days in session were: 1971- 121 days; 1972 - 161 days; 1973 - 117 days; 1974 - 100 days.; 1975 - 139 days.

(4) Ch. 205, SLA 1975 was in effect from July 1, 1975 until October 14, 1976. It was rejected by voter referendum in August, 1976.

## Appendix C. Per Diem System

Since 1977, state statutes have tied legislators' per diem — their fixed daily expenses — to the per diem rates established for other state employees. Per diem rates are set by the Commissioner of Administration.

There are two per diem rates for state employees, depending on how long the employee is stationed away from home. The higher "short-term" rate applies for 30 days or less. After 30 days, per diem drops down to a lower, "long-term" rate. Per diem rates vary according to location, but for Juneau and Anchorage, the short-term rate is \$80, and long-term is \$50.

Unlike state employees, session per diem for most legislators does not drop down to the lower, long-term rate (\$50) after 30 days. Instead, they receive the short-term rate (\$80) for every day of the legislative session. Thus, most legislators receive at least \$9,600 in per diem for a 120-day session.

In addition, legislators may claim "moving" per diem for up to 15 days before the session begins in odd-numbered years, and for up to 10 days before in even-numbered years. After every legislative session, legislators may claim up to five days of moving per diem. Moving per diem covers travel and living expenses for a legislator and his or her family.

According to state statutes, legislators whose permanent residence is Juneau are to receive per diem equal to the "long-term" rate for state employees. In fact, Juneau legislators receive \$60 per diem, not the \$50 long-term rate. That change was made in 1982 by the Commissioner of Administration.

Except for a five-year period in the 1970s, legislators received per diem for every day of the session, regardless of session length. And in most years, legislators whose permanent residence is Juneau have received a lower rate of per diem.

From 1970 to 1975, however, all legislators received \$35 per diem for only the first 90 days of the session.

Legislators also may collect per diem for legislative duties performed when the legislature is not in session. When such work is done in a legislator's hometown, he/she qualifies for per diem at the long-term rate. If overnight travel is required, the short-term rate applies.

The amount of interim per diem collected varies dramatically from legislator to legislator, based for the most part on committee assignments and leadership position.

When per diem was eliminated under the 1983 pay change, effective July 1983 to January 1987, the only per diem collected was for actual travel required by legislative business away from home. In that period, according to the Legislative Affairs Agency, per diem was not claimed for legislative business done in the legislator's hometown.



## Appendix D. Public Awareness

At the March 17, 1987 public hearing on the commission's preliminary report, a number of people testifying objected that they were not aware of the public hearings or the preliminary report.

For the record, the commission wishes to point out that newspaper articles were published statewide in January about the commission, its work and its plans.

The following newspapers carried at least one story in late February or early March with specific details about the public hearings: Anchorage Daily News, Anchorage Times, Juneau Empire, Kodiak Daily Mirror, Tundra Drums, Tundra Times, Delta Paper, Aleutian Times, Chilkat Valley News, Peninsula Clarion, Island News, Nome Nugget and Arctic Sounder. Still other newspapers published at least one article about the commission, but without giving the exact time and date of the public hearings. Those include Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Sitka Sentinel and Ketchikan Daily News.

Statewide radio and television (the Alaska Public Radio Network, KTUU-TV and the Associated Press) also broadcast periodic stories about the commission and its work.

In addition, each of the 17 legislative information offices around the state received a press release and copy of the preliminary report. LIO staff were instructed to post notices about the report and the hearings.

Furthermore, the commission noted during the public hearings that even given the opportunity to read the report, many of those testifying declined to do so. The commission heard a discouraging number of myths, misinformation and misunderstandings from those who testified.